ISLAM In the Holy Quran

The Fundamentals of Islamic Thought

His Eminence Imam Khamenei

B.A.A. Center

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in the
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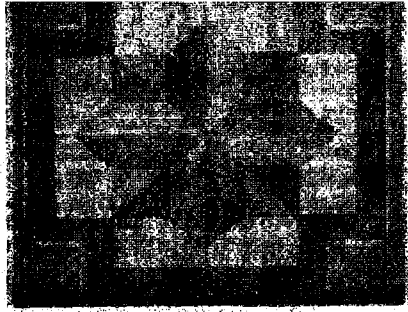
Ayatullah sayyed Ali Khamenei, the Revered Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, delivered several lectures in 1974, 1353 A.H., which were later summarized and published. The original title selected by the learned author for the book was "Tarh Kulli Andisha Islami Dar Quran" (The General concepts of Islam in the Quran). What the author intended was to introduce the principles of Islam according to the Quran. He accordingly provides a general survey of Islamic concepts by supporting his beliefs with different verses of the Quran.
It is worth noting that this book is one among many others by Imam Khamenei and what characterizes those books is that they were issued in the most critical times in the history of our Islamic nation. Moreover, they concentrated mainly on promulgating and clarifying the principles of political work and revolution. We could almost say that most of Imam Khamenei's lectures that were published in various books, and his articles that were gathered all centered on this continuous endeavor to clarify the correlation between the Islamic teachings and the big social responsibility.

About the Author

Ayatullah Sayyed Ali Khamenei was born on July the15th, 1939, of a religious family in the Holy City of Mashhad. His father, Sayyed Jawad Khamenei was one of the virtuous ulamā[1] of Mashhad. His mother is the daughter of Sayyed Hashim Najafabadi, one of the well-known ulamā of Mashhad. She was a chaste and honourable woman, who had knowledge of religious injunctions and very high morals.

Upon completion of his preliminary studies Imam Khamenei entered the Nawwab Seminary to pursue his theological studies under the auspices of such mentors as Ayatullah Milani and Ayatullah Sheikh Hashim Qazwini.
In 1959, he went to Qum and became the student of Ayatullah Burujerdi, Imam Khomeini, and Ayatullah Haeri. He was in the forefront in the Uprising of 5th June, 1963 (15th of Khurdad[2], 1342) against the despised Pahlavi regime.
He then established a secret organization founded on Islamic ideology and Shi'ism. When this latter was discovered, many of the leading ulamā were arrested and thrown into prisons.

However, Aytullah Khamenei and some others managed to flee.
In 1965, he returned to Mashhad where he was always threatened by the SAVAK[3] and security agents of the Shah. Nevertheless, he continued teaching theological students. His lessons of Nahj al-Balaghah[4] and interpretation of the Quran attracted many people, especially the youth.
Ayatullah Khamenei, throughout the revolutionary struggle, was in the vanguard of the Islamic movement. Between 1965 and 1979 he was imprisoned six times and each time kept in solitary confinement.
In 1976, upon release he expanded his activities making speeches all over the country while he preached Islam among the youth. In 1978, he established the Scholars' Association. A year later, he was exiled to Iranshahr and then to Jiroft, but even after his release he was kept under SAVAK's close watch.

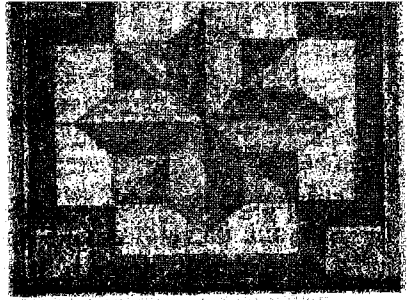
Ayatullah Khamenei at the culmination of the great Islamic Revolution, upon the recommendation of Ayatullah Mutahhari[5], was appointed a member of the Revolutionary Council. After the victory of the Revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic, he held numerous key posts such as: Representative of the Revolutionary Council in the Defense Ministry, Commander of the Guards Corps of the Islamic Revolution, Imam's Representative in the Supreme Defense Council, deputy of the people of Tehran in the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis), the Leader of the Friday Congregational Prayers, and the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
He was also elected unanimously as the Secretary General of the Islamic Republican Party following the martyrdom of Dr. Bahonar[6].

During the Iraqi-imposed war, as the new president of the Islamic Republic of Iran with other members of the Supreme

Defense Council, he played a significant role in organizing the Armed Forces. With his presence at the fronts he raised the morals of the Islamic combatants.
On the 27th of June, 1981 and due to the explosion of a bomb planted inside a tape recorder by some hypocrites, he lost his right hand while delivering a speech in Abu-zar Mosque in Tehran. The Great Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini repeatedly asked after his welfare while he was in hospital.
After his recovery, Imam Khamenei stressed that his second life was a gift from God, which had been bestowed on him to serve Islam and the Muslims.
He was elected as the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the second term on the 20th of August, 1985 with a massive vote.
Following the sad demise of the Great Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran – Imam Khomeini – he was elected the Leader of the Islamic Revolution by a large majority of the votes of the Assembly of Experts on the 4th of June, 1989.

As an author since 1963, Sayyid Khamenei has written many books, treatises and articles, some of which are still unpublished. Below are some of their titles:

- Jihad
- Fatawa[7] (2 volumes)
- Faith
- Prophethood
- The agony of Imam Ali[8] and Ours
- The Quran and the Progeny of the Prophet
- Lessons in Knowing Islam
- Lessons in Beliefs
- Lessons in Hadith (Prophetic tradition)

- Migration
- Political Life of Imam Assadiq[9]
- Monotheism
- Al-Wilaya
- Jihad in the Lives of the Imams
- Quranic Commentary
- Knowing Imam Ali
- Treatise on Patience
- Lessons in Quran
- The Traits of Muslims
- Questions and Answers (5 volumes)
- Biographies of Transmitters of Hadith (four)
- Lessons in Ethics
- Outlines of Islamic Thought in the Quran
- The Role of Muslims in India
- Correct Understanding of Islam
- Government in Islam
- Glimpse at Nahjul Balagha
- Political Dimension of Imam Al-Rida's[10] Personality
- Art as Perceived by the Leader of the Revolution
- The Struggle of Imam Assajjad[11]
- Translation of the Treaty of Imam Al-Hassan[12]
- Translation of the "Future is for This Religion"
- Translation of "Verdict on Western Civilization"
- A series of lectures on Imamate
- "Our Position" which he wrote in collaboration with the Martyr Ayatullah Beheshti, Martyr Dr. Bahonar and Sheikh Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Preface

Propounding Islam in its practical, social form along with its coherent, harmonious fundamentals that tackle human life from its various aspects is considered a prior necessity today.
In the past, Islamic researches and investigations were generally devoid of these two important characteristics. Thus, when comparing Islam with other schools of thought and ideologies of our time, researchers failed to reach any fruitful results or come to any decisive judgements. In other words, they have neither been able to reveal the integrity and uniformity of Islam as a whole, nor to define its relation to other schools of thought.
In addition, those researches were mainly theoretical, carried away from the practical and down-to-earth influence, specifically the social one. Therefore, the result has been nothing more than theoretical knowledge that fell short of proposing social responsibilities and duties or any clear perspective of the human social life, especially that related to the form and signification of society.
On the other hand, the Quran, the decisive and incontrovertible holy book of Islam, in most cases, didn't get the chance to be

subject to research and explanation. Para-mental studies or dubious narrations and traditions were referred to instead. Consequently, dogmas, that had no connection to the Quran, evolved and developed. This disconnection between the Islamic studies and the Quran; and being indifferent towards it as well as not feeling the need for it; in addition to losing hope in the possibility of benefiting from it in a correct way; all theses factors – where each of which, in turn, evolved from a specific factor – lead to turn away from reflecting on or digging into the verses of the Quran and thus resort to perfunctory reading only. In this way, the honored divine Book has become at people's disposal, subject to their deception.

Bearing this reality in mind, three characteristics should be considered as a necessity in Islamic studies:

First, the Islamic system and thoughts, just like any other social school, are not absolutely intellectual and abstract. They take into consideration the practical responsibilities especially the social ones. Hence, the outline they propose for human's life, his goal, and the way to reach that goal should be put under reflection and investigation.

Secondly, the intellectual Islamic issues should be perceived and studied in a correlated manner and as being parts of one whole. In other words, when one studies those issues he should bear in mind that each of them consists a component of the whole (religion), is correlated to the other components, and consists a fundamental element of the overall structure. Knowing those fundamentals result in inducing the general and thorough outlines of the religion in a perfect ideological manner that is in proportion with the various aspects of human's life and away from any ambiguities.

Thirdly, for the understanding and inducing of the Islamic principles to be purely "Islamic", one has to rely on the fundamental sources of the religion, and not on personal

opinions and analysis, or on onslaught thoughts coming from here and there.
The Quran is considered the perfect and most reliable source, however, on the condition that one profoundly digs into it as the Quran itself commands.
What has been compiled in this treatise is an example of this endeavor to achieve the above-mentioned goals. In these discourses, effort was made to study the most important fundamentals of Islam in its most constructive and vital aspects by reflecting on the Quranic verses. Besides, through the explanation stated forth, and that teaches the reader how to reflect on and dig into the Quran, we pointed out the fundamentals mentioned in the verses. Where necessary, we benefited from the unbiased traditions of the Prophet and the infallible Imams to clarify and emphasize the practical aspect of the Islamic fundamentals as being a part of the way of thinking and Islamic ideology.

1- Faith

Man's endeavor and movement, which are the philosophy behind his existence, have a starting point that is called "faith".
Faith means belief, acceptance and adherence to the goal that man has to strive for, to the way that will make him reach that goal, and finally to this very endeavor and movement.
Without faith, every movement is transient and fruitless, and every pursuit will be inert with stagnancy as its outcome. Therefore, the Holy Quran emphasizes "the faith" and "the faithful" and introduces this character trait as the supreme value, which stands at the peak of all human qualities.
Now let us examine and reflect on the Islamic values that are considered of first degree, and the place of faith, which enjoys the highest rank among them, in the following verse:

{It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East and (or) West. But, righteousness is (the quality) of he who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets; who gives of his wealth – out of love for

Him – to the kinsfolk, the orphans, the needy, the traveler, and the beggars, and who frees the slaves, performs the prayer, pays the alms-tax. And they who fulfill their covenant, when they have engaged in one, and steadfast in extreme poverty, ailment, and in times of war, such are the true believers; such are the pious.} (2:177).

In response to the adherents of the divine religions, who considered Judaism or Christianity as the only way to salvation, the Quran puts forward the broad Islamic faith and considers it conductive to guidance:

"Say: We believe in Allah, and (in) that which has been sent down to us and sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob), and Al-Asbat (the offspring of the 12 sons of Jacob) , and (in) that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus) and to the prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit (in Islam). If they believe in the like of that you believe in, then they are rightly guided..}. (2:135-138).

2- Conscious Faith

By reflecting on the following verses, we end up with the following:
1. Having faith in the principles and foundations of the Islamic doctrine – one of the outstanding characteristics of the Prophet and his loyal followers – is highly important, the Quran having laid great emphasis on this:

{The Messenger believes in what was sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers; each one believes in Allah, His angels, His Books and His messengers.(they

say), "we make no distinction between any of His messengers- and they say, "We hear, and obey. Our Lord, (grant us) Thy forgiveness, our Lord! unto Thee is the final return"}. (2:285)

2. However, the faith meant is the conscious one that is based on awareness and perception, away from fanaticism. It is this faith that kept the Prophet and his true followers away from slavery and naïve devotion that would make one's efforts absurd, futile and devoid of purpose.
In the following verses, there is a clear reference to such awareness:

{Surely, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day there are signs for men of deep understanding. Those who remember Allah when standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth (saying,) "Our Lord, Thou hast not created (all) this in vain. Glory be to Thee. Guard us against the torment of the Fire. Our Lord, whomsoever Thou admit to the Fire, indeed, Thou have disgraced him; and the evil-doers shall have no helpers. Our Lord, we have heard a preacher calling to faith (saying): "Believe in your Lord", so we believed"} (3: 190-193).

3. Were it not for this consciousness, awareness, and clear reasoning, faith would have turned into a petrified and ignorant bigotry and as a result, the way to the truth and salvation would have been blocked for human beings. Therefore, the Holy Quran condemns this kind of fanatic faith, which is taken after the ancestors and that the infidels and rejecters tightly hold onto. Let us consider this rigorous and preachy speech:
{And when it is said to them, "Come to that which Allah has

revealed, and to the Messenger," they say: "sufficient for us is what we found our fathers following, even though, their fathers knew nothing and were not rightly guided."} (5:104).

3- Faith Generates Work and Abidance

Is it enough for the faith to be confined to a complete mental acceptance? Or does it become considerable when it turns into a "life course" and "practical commitment"?
We find that the Holy Quran emphasizes the fact that faith is always associated with practice and becomes a motive to "proceed through the way to the required".
In many verses, the Quran shows that getting the rewards of this life and that of the Hereafter depend upon "faith that is associated with practice". Let us look through the Quranic speech and think about it:

{O believers, bow down and prostrate yourselves. Worship your Lord and do good so that you may succeed. Strive hard for the cause of Allah, as you ought to. He has chosen you, and has laid on you no burdens in your religion: it is the religion of your father Abraham. It is He who named you Muslims before and in this (Quran), so that the Messenger may be a witness for you, and that you yourselves may be witnesses for mankind. So perform the prayer, pay the alms-tax, and hold fast to Allah; He is your patron – what a gracious Patron, what a gracious Helper!} (22: 77-78).

In the aforementioned verses, we find that the most important fiducial, religious characteristics are success and prosperity, being of the chosen by God, leadership, progress of humanity, and finally, divine care and support. These characteristics are the outcome of faith that is associated with practice.

The following verse (from Al-Anfal) mentions in another tone and diction, deeds that are the outgrowth of such faith. Moreover, it shows its role in guarding the Islamic society.

{Surely, those who believed, migrated, strove hard, and fought for the cause of Allah, with their properties and their lives; and those who gave them shelter and help-shall be allies to one another; and those who believed but have not migrated, you owe no duty of protection over them till they migrate}. (8: 72).

4- Faith and Abidance

True faith, which was a stimulus to contemplate on the previous verses, is correlated to obedience. However, profiteers and exploiters don't look at their fiducial responsibilities as being an obligation. Yet, as long as these rules suit their personal interests and aggression, they abide by them. Otherwise, they are ready to neglect and ignore them.

The culture of the Quran states that such people – who haven't even left a relic of faith in their hearts for the day of repentance – are unfaithful. Further, happiness, success, prosperity, superiority etc… and those good tidings for the believers, are meant for those who abide by the religious duties under all circumstances.

The following verses are the Holy Quran's clear proclamation in this regard:

{Certainly, we have sent down (in this Quran) clear signs (that shows the right path to Allah and make it clear); and Allah guides whom He wills to the straight path. They (hypocrites) say, "We believe in Allah and the Messenger, and we obey". Then a party of them turns away thereafter; surely, these are not believers. And when they are called

to Allah (i.e. His Word, the Quran) and His Messenger to judge between them, lo! A party of them refuses and turns away. Had truth been on their side, they come to him with submission. Is there a sickness in their hearts, or they are in doubt? Or they do fear that Allah and His Messenger may deny them justice? Nay, they themselves are the wrongdoers. The only saying of the believers when are called to Allah and His messenger, is that: "We hear, and we obey"- such are the successful (who will live forever in paradise). He who obeys Allah and His Messenger, fears Allah, and keeps his duty (unto Him); such indeed are the triumphant.} (24: 46-52).

The following verse announces the divine promise to appoint the faithful as God's successors on earth, make them reign over the whole world, and establish the ideal Islamic society by the faithful who fulfill their obligations in accordance with faith.

{Allah has promised those of you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will certainly grant them succession (to the present rulers) in the land, as He granted to those before them. And that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion that He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam), and will give them in exchange, after their fear, security. (providing) They worship Me and do not associate anything with Me.} (24:55).

5- Good Tidings

What does man need in order to attain the ultimate happiness? He needs:

1. To know the goal, the furthest level of happiness one can reach, and the way to it (guidance).

2. To remove the veils of: ignorance, self-conceit and doubts, in addition to all that might hinder him from knowing the essence of his self, and from right perception and understanding, so that the light of Truth enlightens his heart (The Light).

3. What saves him, in the course of his long journey to happiness, from inner scruples- that are considered far more ferocious and dangerous than the outward factors- (Peace and Security).

4.To see his endeavor as being fruitful and hope for a successful ending.

5. His sins and pitfalls to be forgiven (Forgiveness and Mercy).

6. To feel under all circumstances that he's relying on trustful matters.

7. The power that outweighs that of human beings, when facing the enemies and perils.

8. To surpass all hostile camps.

9. To overcome those intruders who try to stand in the way of his goal.

10. To reach the ultimate goal, despite of all kinds of difficulties, distresses and perils. (Triumph and Success)

11. Under all circumstances, – along this journey and after reaching the ultimate goal – to make good use of the great

givings that have been prepared for human beings in this world.
Finally, at the end of his life cycle and entire endeavors, he reaches a decent reward and repose in the pleasures of heaven.
Now let us listen to the Quranic speech that gives good tidings to those who follow the path of faith, practice, and abidance.

1- Guidance

{Surely those who believe and do good, their Lord will guide them through their faith...}(10:9).

{O mankind, a clear proof has come to you from your Lord; We have sent down to you a manifest light. As for those who believe in Allah, and hold fast to Him, He will surely admit them to His mercy and grace and will guide them to Himself on a straight path"} (4:174-175).

{As for those who strive hard in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our paths. And verily Allah is with the good-doers} (29:69)

2- Light

{Allah is the Supporter of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their supporters are false gods who bring them out of light into darkness. Those are the dwellers of the fire and shall abide therein forever}.(2:257)

{O you, who believe, remember Allah with much remembrance. Praise Him morning and evening. It is He who sends His

blessing onto you and His angels so that He may bring you out of darkness into light} (33: 41-43)

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and believe in His Messenger, He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and He will give you a light by which you shall walk} (57:28)

3- Tranquility, Security, and Peace

Ridding oneself from scruples, anxiety, and confusion is one of the most important traits of the faithful. The Quran promises those such a great spiritual state.

{Those who believe, and their hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah: verily, in the remembrance of Allah hearts do find rest. Those who believed and do righteous deeds Tuba(all kinds of happiness or name of a tree in Paradise) is theirs, and a beautiful place of (final) return}. (13:28-29).

Here is the Prophet Abraham offering an example for the straying unbelievers of his time who did not follow the religion and firm path- and hence their souls were disturbed and denied tranquility. He offers them an example of soul's calmness and inner peace that stems from firm belief.

{And his people disputed with him. He said: "Do you dispute with me concerning Allah while He has guided me? I fear not whom you associate with Him in worship. (Nothing can happen to me) except when my Lord wills something. My Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge; will you not then remember? And how should I fear whom you associate with Him in worship, while you do not fear that you have associated with him in worship things for which He has not

sent down to any authority! Which of the two parties is more entitled to security, if you do know? Those who believe, and have not confounded their belief with evildoing to them (only) is security; they are rightly guided".} (6:80-22).

4- The Fruitful Outcome

The believer knows that every step he takes, brings him nearer to the goal and that every movement he makes, bears fruitful results of which nothing would be lost and all amounts to a good ending.

{... And We did not appoint the Qiblah(prayer direction towards Jerusalem) that you used to face, but to know those who follow the Messenger from they who would turn on their heels(i.e. disobey)-indeed, it was grave (test) save for those whom Allah has guided. Allah would never leave your faith to waste-truly; Allah is the Most Kind, the Most Merciful to mankind}. (2:143)

{So whoever does righteous deeds while he is a believer, his endeavor shall not be rejected. Verily, we record it for him}. (21:94).

In the Islamic cosmic notion, all phenomenon of this world are created by and dependent on a superior power. This power is God who possesses all the attributes of perfection such as knowledge, power (authority) will, life....

From the kernel of the atom that cannot be seen up to the culmination of planets, galaxies, and the unknown world, all move by His will and are guided by Him. Further, all creatures, are His servants and will all return to Him. None of them is outside the circle of servitude even what comes under the title of sonship, matrimony, and the like attributed to God.
His servants receive everything – reason, perception, power, awareness, will and all material needs from Him – He is the source of everything and raison d'être.
This idea constitutes the basis of all thoughts, programs, and laws in Islam.
The delicate melody of monotheism can be heard in several hundred verses of the Quran.

{Allah! La ilaha illa huwa (non has the right to be worshipped but He), the Ever living, the One who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs all that is in heavens and earth. Who can intercede except with His permission? He knows what happens to them(His creatures) in this world and in the Hereafter. They will never come to know any of His knowledge save that He wills. His Kursi (footstoll) extends over the heavens and the earth; the preserving of them wearies Him not; He is the Most High, the Great} (2:255)
{And they say: "The Most Gracious (Allah) has begotten a son (or offspring or children). Indeed, you have brought forth (said) a terrible evil thing). The heavens are almost torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins, that they ascribe a son to the Most gracious. But it is not suitable (for the Majesty) of the Most Gracious (Allah) that He should beget a son. There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Gracious (Allah) as a slave. Verily, He has enumerated them (his creatures). He has counted them a full counting.} (19:88-94)

6- Monotheism in the Islamic Ideology

Quranic monotheism is not just a mere idea. It is rather a knowledge that is bound to commitment and a view that is effective and constructive. It is an intellectual approach to construct and manage society, draw its strategic course line, determine its goal, and finally provide the elements of its sustentation and continuation. In other words, monotheism constitutes the main basis of Islam.
The attachment of man and the world to the Supreme Power (God) implies their purposive movement towards a certain goal. This attachment encompasses the following responsibility: Every human being that possesses perception

and will, must proceed towards the right goal and hence must learn what that goal is.
Creation and dominance[13] over all creatures belong only to God, which implies that the reins of legislation should be in His hands and His hands only. Thus, all creatures (who have perception and in need of a law) are obliged to abide by His law (deity is exclusively His).
Moreover, the omniscience of God entails that the competence, to legislate the humans' codes (that ensure their well-being) is solely His.
In addition, the servitude of all to God necessitates that no one, of his own will and choice, has the right to reign over others (negation of idolatry). For, the ruler, that is the director and manager of people's affairs, is only he who is chosen by God (either appointed by name like it is the case for the infallible Imams or by conditions and traits as it is the case for the Islamic ruler during the occultation of the infallible Imam).and this is what is meant by "Godhood is exclusively His".
Pondering on the following verses, throws light upon the Islamic intellectual approach concerning monotheism and its matters:

{And of Mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah (God) as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they do love Allah. However, those who believe love Allah (more than anything else does). If only, those who do wrong, could see, when they see the torment, that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment when those who were followed disown(declare themselves innocent of) those who followed(them), and they see the torment, then all their relations will be cut off for them * and those who followed will say: "if only we had one more chance to return(to the worldly life), we would disown (declare*

ourselves innocent from) them as they have disowned (declared themselves innocent from) us". Thus, Allah will show them their deeds as regrets for them. And they will never get out of the Fire} (2:165-167).

7- The Restriction of Worship and Obedience to God

We came to know that monotheism besides being a philosophical perspective; is a practical and constructive concept. In other words, it is a doctrine upon which the development of man's personal and social life depends.
In the following, we will point out some of the general outlines of the "Monotheism text" in the Holy Quran:
According to the principle of monotheism, human beings do not have the right to worship or obey anyone or anything other than God. Thus, all the authorities that were imposed on mankind, throughout history, were false and illegitimate. This includes idols, counterfeit gods, people claiming deity, and those that are self-indulgent. The following verses (from Yunus chapter), which talk about the false and illusive partners (of God) – be they human or other – give a comprehensive demonstration of this view.

{And the day whereon we shall assemble them all together, then We shall say to those who did set partners in worship with Us: "keep to your place, you and your partners(whom you had worshipped in the worldly life)" . Then We shall separate them from each other and their partners shall say, "it wasn't us that you worshipped". So sufficient is Allah as a witness between you and us that we indeed were heedless of your worship of us". There! Every person will know (exactly) what he had done before; and they shall be brought back to Allah, their true Lord, and that they

invented (their false deities) will escape from them. Say (O Mohammed): "Who provides for you from sky and earth? Or who possesses hearing and sight? And who brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living? And who disposes the affairs?" They will say, "Allah" then say: "will you not guard (against evil) then?"...} (10:28-31).

After a few more verses, the speech continues with a tone that further denotes human idols and godhood pretenders, rather than inanimate ones.

{Say: "Is there any of your partners who guides to the truth?" Say: "It is Allah who guides to the truth. Then, He who guides to the truth, is more worthy to be followed or he who finds no guidance unless he is guided? Then, what is the matter with you? How do you judge?" (10:35).

It is obvious that guidance and being rightfully guided are matters that pertain to the living human creature. Therefore, the previous verse is related to those who claimed godhood and hence considered themselves to be the partners of God or His substitutes. Denying the worship of false deities – whether they be in the garment of men of faith (Rabbis, Monks) or people of political and economical power (opulent, self-indulgent, idols, or leaders and chiefs of society) – constitutes the spirit of monotheism.
This is what the following verses demonstrate:

{Say(O Mohammed) : " O People of the Scripture(Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between you and us, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as Lords besides Allah. Then if they turn away, say, "Bear

witness that we are Muslims" } (3:64)

On the other hand, obeying the devoted servants of God is considered obedience to God Himself.

8- Islamic Monotheism: Denying Servitude but to God

The scope of monotheism and its approach in life and in the social system are made clearer through reflecting upon some verses that touch on the issues of monotheism and polytheism. The Holy Quran considers that worshipping no one but God is not enough for someone to be a monotheist. Other conditions are required such as not to obey God's adversaries.
This matter is so evident in the Quran, to the extent that "obedience" and "followship" were mentioned in some cases under the title of "worship". Moreover, those who obey other than God are polytheists. Accordingly, "worshipping God" which is the spirit of monotheism can be expressed by "the servitude and obedience that is exclusive to God".
Thus, obedience and servitude to other than God is considered polytheism, whether related to personal affairs, public codes, or to the form of the social system and its structure.

{[Say (O Mohammed)] "Shall I seek a judge other than Allah when it is He who sent down unto you the Book (the Quran) fully explained". Those to whom we gave the Scripture [the Jews and the Christians] know that it is revealed from your Lord in truth; so be not of who doubt And the Word of your Lord is fulfilled in truthfulness and justice. None can change His words. And he is the All-hearing, the All-knowing.* And if you obey most of those on earth they will lead you astray from the path of Allah, they follow nothing but conjectures, and they do nothing but lie**

*Verily, your Lord knows best he who strays from His path, and He knows best those who are rightly-guided. **
*So eat of that (meat) on which Allah's Name has been pronounced (while slaughtering the animal), if you truly believe in His Ayat(verses, proofs, revelations etc..). * And why should you not eat of that on which the name of Allah has been mentioned when he has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except when you are constrained? And surely, many do lead (mankind) astray by their desires through lack of knowledge. Certainly, your Lord knows best the transgressors. * Leave (O mankind, all kinds of) sins, the outward and inward ones. Verily those who commit sin will get due recompense for what they used to commit *And eat not of that on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned; for surely it is a sin. And certainly, the devils do inspire their followers to dispute with you, and if you obey them, then you would indeed be polytheists.}* (6:114-121).

{And Paradise shall be brought near to the pious and righteous and Hell brought in sight of the erring* and it will be said to them," where are those that you used to worship (other than Allah)? *Instead of Allah, can they help you or(even) help themselves? * Then they will be thrown(in Fire) onto their faces, they and the erring*and the hosts of Satan all together. * They will say while contending therein: *By Allah, we were truly in manifest error, * when we held you as equals with the Lord of all beings (mankind and all that exists)* and no one lead us astray but the evil-doers(that includes criminals, murderers, polytheists etc...and Satan). *Now we have no intercessors. * nor an intimate friend (to help us). * (Alas!) If only we had a chance to return back (to the world), we shall truly be among the believers! * Verily in that is a sign, yet most of them are not believers".}* (26:90-103).

9- Islamic Monotheism and the Annulment of Castes

Social discrimination and the presence of castes within a nation represent one of the greatest injustices of history. The belief in such social form is rooted in the idea that says, "There are different gods that administer the various castes and they have created each of them with special privileges". Therefore, those who espoused these ideas considered that the existence of the upper class is natural and a special gift, while the deprivation of lower one is an innate necessity.
Whereas, monotheism considers that all creatures are God's creations, and eradicates all roots of caste from people's minds, reality, and society through the teachings that arise from the monotheistic foundation.

By pondering on the following verses, we come to grasp some of those teachings:

1- The Creator and the Lord of all is God.
2- All were created from one corporeal origin.
3- No one enjoins a special trait that entitles him to special rights.
4- All merits (of perfection) are feasible to everybody and attaining them is correlated to people's continuous pursuit and endeavor.
5- All Existence is a manifestation of His (existence) where mankind is in real, true and innate need for Him.

{Say(O Mohammed): "whose is the earth, and whosoever is therein? if you know! They will say: "it is Allah's! Say: "Will you not then remember?" * Say: "Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the grand Throne?" * They will say, "Allah". Say: "Will you not then fear Allah (believe in His Oneness, obey Him, believe in the*

resurrection and recompense for every good or bad deed)?"
** Say, "In Whose hand is the sovereignty of all things?" And He protects (all), while against Him there is no protection, if you do know. * They will say, " (all that belongs) to Allah." Say, "How then are you deceived?" * Nay, but We've brought them (Islamic Monotheism) the truth, and verily they are liars. * No son (or offspring) has Allah begotten, nor is there any other god besides Him.(had there been more than one God) then, each god would have taken away what he has created, and they would have overcome each other. Glorified is Allah, above all that they attribute to Him!}*(23:84-91).

{O mankind! we have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you is he who has piety. Verily, Allah is all Knowing, all aware.} (49: 13)

{ And, indeed, we have honored the children of Adam, and we have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with lawful good things, and had preferred them above many of those whom we have created with a marked preferment}(17:70).

10- The Spiritual Influence of Islamic Monotheism

Just as the most important message of monotheism is to "establish a monotheist society"– a society that is not divided into castes and is under the rule of God and His laws – the influences that result from this belief on the spirit and soul are of the most amazing aspects of this sound principle. Thus, it can be said that Islamic Monotheism plays a role in building

both society and the individual.
He who believes in Islamic monotheism will develop great and enviable traits, such as ultimate hope, endless yearning and endeavor, absence of fear and greed, open mindedness and perspicuity, heading right....
The Holy Quran points to such traits in many of its verses, when speaking about faith and the kind of life the monotheists live.

*"Those (i.e. believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, "verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them". But it (only) increased them in faith, and they said: "Allah (Alone) is sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)." * So they returned with grace and bounty from Allah. No harm touched them; and they followed the good pleasure of Allah. And Allah is the owner of Great Bounty.* It is only Satan that suggests to you the fear of his supporters (and friends of polytheists); so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers.}* (3:173-175).

What is the cause that stands behind the need for divine religions and the philosophy of "prophethood" which conveys the divine message? What is the meaning of "prophethood"? How does it relate to the "prophetic mission", and what are their goals? What is the starting point of the prophets' movement and to where does it end?
These questions and many more, relate to the fundamental and crucial issues of the principle of prophethood. By coming to know these issues, humans can attain a profound and firm belief. The Holy Quran provides answers to these questions in a concise, succinct, and perfect manner.

11- The Philosophy of Prophethood

A human being's five senses and instincts, and all that is above that, such as all the knowledge developed by humans throughout the generations, alone can never guide mankind to true happiness. For, man needs a guidance superior to that

of the mind and that can lead it, maintain it, and promote it; it is the guidance of revelation.
The revelation of God who has created mankind has all that fulfills his needs and imperfections, and cures his pain and suffering. This is what all religions of the world suggest, and that is the philosophy of "prophethood".
Due to this need, prophets are sent and carry out the programs that mankind yearn for. These facts can be clearly seen in the following verses:

{Mankind were one community. Then Allah sent forth the prophets with good tidings and warnings, and with them, He sent down the Scripture in truth to judge between people in matters wherein they differed. None disputed it save those to whom it (the Scripture) was given after clear proofs had come unto them, through hatred of one another. Then Allah by His Leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed. And Allah guides whom He wills to the straight path} (2:213).

*{All that is in the heavens and earth glorifies Allah, the King (of everything), the Holy, the All-mighty, and the All-wise. It is He Who sent forth among the unlettered a Messenger (Mohammed) of their own, reciting to them His verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelieve and polytheism) , and teaching them the Book (the Quran) and Wisdom. Though they had been before in manifest error; * And (also sent prophet Mohammed to) others among them (Muslims) who have not yet joined them. And He is the All-mighty, the All-wise. * That is the grace of Allah, He bestows on whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of Mighty Grace. }*(62:1-4).

12- Mission of Prophethood

Prophethood is a mission, which means rising after quiescence. This mission first begins in the prophet's inward and soul, to disseminate later on, in his surrounding and the world.
Further, the prophet is the only person capable to bear the burden of this significant responsibility due to the exceptional aptitudes he possesses. However, during the pre-mission period, the prophet has the potential to have such aptitudes but they would still be hidden and unrealized. Thus, he leads a social life just like ordinary people and when inspired with the divine revelation a tremendous change is caused in him and he is sent as God's envoy to mankind.
The following verses of (Al-Duha chapter 93) that are full of good tidings record the beginning of the missionary revival in the inside and soul of the Great Prophet.

*{By the forenoon (after sunrise) * by the night when it darkens (and stand still) * Your Lord (O Mohammed) has neither forsaken you nor hates you * And indeed the Hereafter is better for you than the present (life of this world). * And verily, your Lord will give you (all goods) so that you shall be well-pleased. * Did He not find you (O Mohammed) an orphan and gave you a refuge? * And He found you unaware (of the Quran, its laws and prophethood) and guided you? * And He found you poor and made you rich (self-sufficient with self-contentment)?}* (93: 1-8).

This inward missionary revival – which also affected the Prophet's body and nerves –, starts with the first stages of inspiration that we read in Al-Alak (the Clot) chapter:

*{Read! In the name of your Lord who has created(all that exists). * He has created man of a clot (a piece of thick*

*coagulated blood). * Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. * Who has taught by the pen * He has taught man that he knew not. Nay! Indeed, man does transgress (in disbelief and evil deed) * Because he considers himself self-sufficient. * Surely, unto your Lord is the return * }* (96:1-8).

Further, this inner transformation is also reflected in the following verses of AL-Najm chapter:

*{By the star, when it sets (or vanishes),R your companion (Mohammed) has neither gone astray nor has erred. * Nor does he speak out of (his own) desire. * It is only a revelation revealed. * He has been taught (this Quran) by one mighty in power (Gabriel). * One free from any defect in body and mind then he (Gabriel) rose and became stable * when he was at the uppermost horizon * then he (Mohammed) drew near and came closer. * And was at a distance of two bows length or (even) nearer. * So (Allah) revealed to His slave (Mohammed) that which He revealed. The (Prophet's) heart denied not what he saw. * Will you then dispute with him about what he sees?}* (53:1-12).

Certainly, after the inward revival that changed the Prophet's path and gave his endeavor a different heading, he is asked to act in life earnestly, without sparing any effort so that he would cause a fundamental change and revival in the society and the core of human life.

13- The Social Mission of Prophethood

Prophets appear in times of social chaos and disorder to reform, guide, and carry out missionary work that is in harmony with the human's innate nature as well as to lift the society and lead it to its perfection. For, prophets are the ones who make the

truth conquer falsehood.
Man would be undertaking the natural course – which makes him head to sublimity and perfection that befit him – when he moves and acts in accordance with the universal and human natural system, and when complying with the teachings that are in harmony with his spiritual and physical make up. However, throughout history, ignorance and abandonment obstructed the path of humanity and by imposing inhuman regimes, people strayed from that natural course. The prophets, though, were there to guide the people back to it. From this illustration, we come to know that the prophet has to cause a fundamental and comprehensive change in all life aspects. He must turn the ignorant and warped social system into a sound and just one; and this is the missionary revival that takes place in society after the prophet is sent. In fact, through this great prophetic mission all ignorant norms, programs, laws and habits come to an end, and are replaced by the sound system and straight religion which is God's.
By looking into the first verses of Al-Qasas (the Narrations) chapter and reflecting on them, we observe the prevalent concepts of the inhuman regime of Pharaoh. On the other hand, we see the divine and natural order that Moses introduces as a substitute.

*{These are the verses of the manifest Book (that discern truth from falsehood, good from evil). *. We recite to you some of the news of Moses in truth for a people who believe (in the Quran and the Oneness of Allah). * Verily Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people sects, persecuting a group (i.e. the children of Israel) of them, killing their sons, and sparing their women. Verily, he was an evil-doer. *And we wish to favor those who were oppressed in the land, and to make them leaders, and to*

*make them the inheritors. * And to establish them in the land, and to let Pharaoh, Haman, and their hosts, receive from them what they dreaded.}* (28:2-6).

In several verses of the Quran, God mentions the necessity of making His religion overcome all other religions and that is the meaning of the establishment of the divine regime or system. (This issue has repeatedly been mentioned in many chapters such as "Al-Tawba, "Al-Fath", and "As-Saff"). The following verses are from As-Saff chapter:

*{And who does more wrong than he who invents a falsehood against Allah while he is being invited to 'Islam'? And Allah guides not the people who are wrongdoers (polytheists, evil-doers and disbelievers). * They intend to extinguish the light of Allah (the religion of Islam, the Quran and the Prophet) with their mouths. But Allah will perfect His light, even though the unbelievers dislike it. * It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, to make it victorious over all (other) religions, though the polytheists (including idolaters, pagans and disbelievers) dislike it}*. (61:7-9).

14- The Objectives of Prophethood

We mentioned that the prophet brings about a real awakening and revival into his social environment besides destroying all ignorant premises. But what is the aim of such deed?
The supreme and exalted goal of prophets is to bring people out of the swamp of secular life and its corruptions by triggering those aptitudes that lie deep inside them and hence bringing them to the culmination of human perfection.

Man was created with a nature that is rich and bountiful in beauty and virtue. However, being subject to proper education and rearing is what guarantees the triggering of such nature and bringing it into light as well as making man reach perfection. Thus, the aim of prophets is to provide such education, which is expressed in the Holy Quran under the terms "purification" (At-Tazkia) and "teaching" (At-Ta'leem). In other words, man achieves salvation and fulfills the ultimate goal that God has created him for by following the prophets' teachings.

Now, what steps should mankind take to make use of the talents that lie in his nature and hence reach perfection?

From among the different answers to this question, the prophets' answer stands out to be the ensuring of a healthy surrounding-which is in harmony with the natural make up of the human being- through the establishment of a "divine, just and monotheist society".

Being in such society accelerates man's movement towards the final goal and renders it easier.

Therefore, prophets and apostles, in the midway to the final goal, work to achieve a short-term goal: "establishing an Islamic and monotheist social order" based on justice, monotheism, and dignity of mankind; and away from oppression, polytheism, ignorance, superstition, and every other despicable matter.

Digging into the following verses, we come to grasp the above-mentioned facts.

{Indeed, We have sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and brought down with them Scriptures and the Balance (of justice) so that mankind may keep up justice. And We have sent down iron, wherein is mighty power (in matters of war), as well as many uses for mankind, so that Allah may know who helps Him (His religion) and His messengers in the

unseen. Surely, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.} (57:25).

*"And ordain for us good in this world, and in the Hereafter. Certainly, we have turned unto you. He Said, 'As to My chastisement, I afflict there with whom I will; and My mercy embraces all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who ward off (evil) and pay the alms-tax; and those who believe in our signs (proofs, verses, revelations etc..). * Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write, whom they find written down in the Torah and the Gospel. He commands them to enjoin good, and forbid them to do evil and make good things lawful, and prohibit all that is foul. He releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allah's covenant with the children of Israel) and from the fetters that were upon them. So those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the light (the Quran) that has been sent forth with him, it is they the successful}.* (7:156-157).

15- The Early Tunes of the Mission

The first slogan of the prophets' missionary work is the call to monotheism, which is the most crucial and important of issues, rather it is the real spirit of the prophetic school.

While we observe that the policy of the other schools of thought is to work on gradual basis where the slogans they put forth at the beginning differ from what they actually aim for at the end, we find that the prophets are consistent in their proclamation from the start till the end. Hence, he who believes in the early stages of the prophet's mission will come to know the final goal and pursues it with full perception and awareness.
Those who lived the early stages of the prophets' missions and believed in them – contrary to those who rebelled and

denied them – knew very well all forms of human persecution, discrimination, abuse, and injustice. Besides, they wanted to develop a social order that conforms to humans' freedom and dignity, social justice, and public welfare. This is what used to determine the goal and course of the prophetic school as well as the nature of its adversaries and opponents. Similarly, the way to commitment, adherence, and assuming responsibility used to become clear to those who came after the prophets, what prevented any perversion in the conduct and doctrine to take place.

The Holy Quran mentions in several places "servitude to God" and "avoiding false deities" (i.e. monotheism) as being the first slogan of the prophets.

{And verily, we have sent among every nation (or community) a messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah, and avoid idols (all false deities that might be worshipped besides Allah)". Then amongst them were some whom Allah guided and there were some upon whom delusion was justified. So travel through the land and see what the end was of those who denied (the truth).} (16:36).

{Indeed, we sent Noah to his people, and he said, "O my people! worship Allah! you have no God but Him; certainly, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day!"} (7:59)

*{And to Aad (people, we sent) their brother Hud. He said, "O my people! worship Allah. You have no God but Him. Will you not fear (Allah)?" * the chiefs of the unbelievers of his people said, "verily, we see you in foolishness, and verily, we think that you are of the liars". *(Hud) said, "O My people! there is no foolishness in me, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of all creations! * I convey*

*onto you the messages of my Lord, and I am a trustworthy adviser for you. * Do you wonder that there has come to you a reminder (and an advice) from your Lord through a man from amongst you to want you? And remember that he made you successors after the people of Noah, and increased you amply in stature. So remember the graces (bestowed upon you) from Allah so that you may be successful".* They said, "you have come to us that we should worship Allah alone and forsake that which our fathers used to worship. So bring us that wherewith you have threatened us if you are of the truthful". * (Hud) said, "torment and wrath have already fallen on you from your Lord. Dispute you with me over names which you have named- you and your father with no authority from Allah? Then wait, I am with you among those who wait.}* (7.64- 71).

16- Dissenting Groups

Thus far, we came to know that the prophetic mission is a social resurgence that causes a profound and radical change in the righteous society and among the deprived and aggrieved classes. On the other hand, it threatens the interests and privileges of the upper classes. This point leads us to one of the most important and crucial issues of prophethood: that of "conflict and confrontation".

It is quite obvious, throughout history and in any point of the world, that the call to confront and stand in opposition to class privileges has never been met with common approval. In other words, those who worked to defend the deprived classes were immediately confronted with classes who see in their movement a threat to themselves. This is how confrontation and conflict between the two factions evolved and for this same reason a number of important issues around prophethood were posed.

In order to know those factions thoroughly, we refer to the Holy Quran, which mentions in some places – using a general diction – the presence of dissenting groups against the prophets' missions. In some other place, it mentions three names, which are the titles of three castes (Pharoah, Haman, and Korah as examples of the rulers caste, the "Statesmen and Leaders" caste, and the "Nobles and Upper Class" caste). Again, in some other passages it mentions those three classes and adds to them the "Clergyman" class where they become four classes:

1- (Al-Taghut): "Idols or False Deities" caste.
2- (AL-Malaa): "the Leaders" caste.
3- (Al-Mutrafeen): the "Upper Class" caste
4- (Al-Ahbar and Al-Ruhban): the "Rabbis and Monks" caste.

The following verses, from among many others, are an example that talks in this respect:

*{And so we have appointed for every prophet an enemy -devils from among men and jinn, inspiring one another with adorned speech as a delusion. Had you Lord so willed, they would not have done it, so leave them alone with the fabrications. * (and this is in order) that the hearts of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter may incline to such(deceit), and that they may remain pleased with it, and they may commit what they are committing (all kinds of sins and evil deeds).* (6:112-113).

{And indeed we sent Moses with our Signs (proofs, evidence, etc..) and a manifest authority. To Pharaoh, Haman and Korah, but they called (him): "A sorcerer, a liar!"* Then when he brought them the truth from Us, they said, "kill the sons of those who believe with him, and spare their women'. But the plots of disbelievers are nothing but in vain.}* (40:23-25).

*{Never did we send a Warner to a township but those who were given the worldly wealth and luxuries among them said, "We believe not in the Message you have been sent with. * And they say, "We are more abundant in wealth and children, and we shall not be chastise"}.* (34:34-35).

{O you who believe! Verily, there are many of the rabbis and monks who devour the wealth of mankind in falsehood, and debar (people) from the path of Allah (i.e. Allah's religion). And those who hoard up gold and silver, and spend them not in the way of Allah, announce unto them a painful torment} (9:34).

17- The Consequences of Prophethood (1)

The path that the prophets call people to is a natural one that is in harmony with their innate nature, which makes their movement along that path very fast and easy. Whereas, the despotic and ignorant regimes, who work to keep people away from this path and hence are in conflict with man's nature, are unstable and condemned to annihilation.
This describes the consequences of the prophets' mission.
Contrary to what superficial and naïve theories suggest, the movement of prophets has never been a failure and was void of any falsehood. Moreover, prophets, throughout history, used to realize success and victory as well as guiding people and this will last till the end of the world.
Further, each one of the true message holders, and throughout history, has promoted humanity and facilitated as well as accelerated its movement towards the true goal of creation. After years of endeavor and bitter strife, those messengers have passed away. Their last mission was to entrust this divine responsibility of man's guidance to the apostle or trustee following them. Consequently, humanity in our time has

become closer to the goals of prophets, after the long lifespan it has lived and in the wake of awareness – which is one of the fruits of the prophetic mission.
This natural process will continue in this manner till the last divine authority takes the final step in the way of man's education and right guidance. At that time, man, without any hindrances, will traverse the path of ultimate perfection faster than ever before.
This is the true closure of prophethood and its path.
It is worth noting that all the short-term victories and successes were the outgrowth of two crucial factors: "faith" and "patience", while failures were due to their absence.
In the following verses, there are good tidings for the faithful and sage men:

*{Say: "Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Irresistible". He sends down water from the sky and valleys flow according to their measure, but the flood bears away the foam that mounts up to the surface- and from that (ore) which they heat in the fire to make ornaments or utensils, rises a foam like unto it, thus does Allah show forth truth and falsehood. Then as for the foam it passes away as scum upon the banks, while that which is for the good of mankind remains in the earth. Thus, Allah sets forth parables (for the truth and falsehood i.e. belief and disbelief). * for those who answered their Lord's call is Paradise. But those who answered Him not-if they possessed all that is in the earth with its like, they would offer it in order to save themselves (from the torment, but it will be in vain). For them there will be the terrible reckoning. Their dwelling-place will be Hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest}* (13:16-18).

*{And verily, Our Word has gone forth of old for Our slaves, the messengers, * That they verily would be made*

*triumphant. * And that Our hosts verily would be the victors. * So turn away (O Mohammed) from them for a while. * And watch them and they shall see (the punishment) ! * Do you seek to hasten on Our torment? * Then, when it descends in their courtyard (i.e. near to them), evil will be the morning of those who had been warned! * So turn (O Mohammed) away from them for a while. * And watch and they shall see (the torment)! * Glorified is your Lord, the Lord of honor and power! (He is free) from what they attribute unto Him!}*(37:171-180).

18- The Consequences of Prophethood (2)

In conclusion, throughout history, whenever the prophets and their followers had complete faith and patience, the prophetic mission resulted in victory and prosperity. Moreover, it succeeded in founding the righteous society and order as well as overthrowing the ignorant regimes.

All prophets – even those who faced short-term failures – managed to achieve their goals and objectives in the general course of prophethood. This was through lifting the level of human morals and intellect, and the development of humanity in order to reach the following phase.

The Holy Quran elucidates this truth through several verses, when talking about the facts related to the prophets and what they underwent in order to inform and comfort the last of prophets (Mohammed), the Muslims, and all those who will follow the prophets' path.

{Verily, we will make victorious Our messengers and those who believe, in the present life, and on the day when the witnesses rise. (I.e. Day of Resurrection) The day when their excuses shall not profit the evil-doers. Theirs shall be*

the curse, and theirs shall be the evil abode. * *And indeed We gave Moses the guidance, and we caused the children of Israel to inherit the Scripture (i.e. the Torah.)* * *A guide and a reminder for men of understanding.* * *So be patient (O Mohammed). Surely Allah's promise is true, and ask forgiveness for your sins, and glorify the praises of your Lord in the evening and at dawn.}* (40:51-55).

{How many a town (community) given to wrongdoing have We destroyed, and raised up after them another people. * *Then, when they perceived Our torment (coming), behold, they (tried to) flee from it.* * *Flee not! But return to that wherein you lived a luxurious life, and to your homes, in order that you may be questioned.}* (21:11-13).

After few verses, the Quran cites what happened to Abraham:

{We said, "O fire! Be cool and peace for Abraham!" And They wanted to harm him, but We made them the worst losers. * *And We rescued him and Lot to the land that We have blessed for all beings (mankind and Jinn). And We bestowed upon him Isaac and Jacob (a grandson). Each one We made righteous.* * *And we made them leaders, guiding by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, and performing prayer, and giving the alms-tax, and Us (alone) they worshipped.}* (21:69- 73)

19- Commitment to and Believing in Prophethood

The most practical issue that is feasible to put forth- at the end of prophethood studies- is the following: the acceptance of the prophet's message – According to the philosophy of prophethood, its spirit, essence, and contents – is correlated

to the acceptance of down-to-earth commitment. In other words, he who believes in the prophet's message should follow in his steps and support him in his mission. This attitude, in fact, proves one's faith in this principle.
Prophethood creates a new intellectual atmosphere and suggests a new path and goal.The faithful is then, he who believes in the thoughts the prophet holds, follow his path, and heads towards his goal. Therefore, to oppose the prophet does not necessarily mean to dissent against him, rather it is enough not to follow him to be in opposition. Hence, those who remain neutral towards the prophet and his adversaries are not with the prophet and thus are against him.
A number of Quranic verses declare this truth clearly and without being subject to any doubt.

{Surely, those who believed, and migrated and strove hard and fought with their property and their lives in the cause of Allah, and those who gave (them) asylum and help-those are allies to one another. And as to those who believed but did not emigrate, you owe no protection to them until they migrate; but if they seek your help in the cause of religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people you have a treaty with, of mutual alliance; and Allah is the All-seer of what you do. And those who disbelieve are allies of one another (and) if you (Muslims of the whole world collectively) do not do so (become allies to make victorious Allah's religion) there will be persecution in the Land and great mischief and corruption (appearance of polytheism). * And those who believe, and migrated and strove hard in the cause of Allah and those who gave them asylum and aid -those are the believers in truth, for them is forgiveness and generous provision (that is paradise). * And those who*

believed afterwards and migrated, and strove hard with you (in the cause of Allah) they are of you. But Kindred by blood are nearer to one another (regarding inheritance) in the decree ordained by Allah. Verily Allah is the All- Knower of everything...} (8:72- 75).

{And (remember) when Allah made his covenant with the Prophets, saying, "take whatever I gave you from the Book and Wisdom (understanding of the laws of Allah) and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger (Mohammed) confirming what is with you-you must then believe in him and help him". Allah said, "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up My covenant (which I conclude with you)?" They said, "We agree." He said, "Then bear witness, and I shall be with you among the witnesses." Then whoever turns away after this, they are the rebellious.} (3: 81-82).

{The likeness of those who were entrusted with (the obligations of) Torah (i.e. to obey its commandments and to practice its law), but he who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is as the likeness of a donkey carrying huge burdens of books (and understanding nothing of them). How bad is the example of people who deny the signs (proofs, evidences, verses, revelations..) of Allah. And Allah guides not the wrongdoers.} (62:5).

20 - Al-Wilaya[14]

The new ideology that the prophet assumes by God's revelation holds the promise of a new life, which only sees its fulfillment if such ideology is first established in the mind, soul, and deeds of an organized group.
However, this group, which forms a solid and impenetrable front, has to strongly maintain its unity and harmony, and try not to fuse into other dissenting intellectual and practical movements; what requires it to be cautious towards all forms of relationships and heteronomy that lead to its weakening and fusion. Rather, it has to break up such ties if proved necessary.
Such kind of intellectual and practical association and unanimity is called in the context of the Holy Quran "Al-Wilaya".
Moreover, if this integrated group, – which constitutes the cornerstone of the Islamic society and the foundation for the Islamic nation – grows into a strong nation and a solid

society that fuses in the realm of Islam, it also has to abide by the principle of 'Al-Wilaya"; in order to preserve its unity and prevent the infiltration of the enemies and their conspiracies.

{O you who believe! Take not My enemies and your enemies for friends. Showing affection towards them, while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the truth, and have driven the Messenger out and yourselves (from your homeland) because you believe in Allah your Lord. If you have come forth to strive in My cause and seek My good pleasure (then take not those disbelievers as your friends). You show friendship to them in secret, while I am all-aware of what you conceal and what you reveal. And whosoever of you (Muslims) does that, then indeed has gone astray from the right path. Should they gain the upper hand over you, they would behave to you as enemies, and stretch out their hands and their tongues towards you with evil, and they wish that you would disbelieve.* Neither your kindred nor your children shall benefit you upon the Day of Resurrection. He will judge between you. And Allah is the All-Seer of what you do.*Indeed, has been a good example for you in Abraham, and those with him, when they said to their people, "Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allah: we have rejected you, and there has started between you and us hostility and hatred until you believe in Allah alone."}* (60:1-4).

21. The Ties of the Islamic Nation

The one firmly connected front, which in fact establishes the righteous Islamic city, would soon prevail after founding unity among all believers. Thus, the principle of 'Al-Wilaya' manifests itself in its attitudes as well as in its civil and foreign affairs.

Pertaining to civil affairs, all members of the various classes of the nation have to mobilize all capabilities and power, in extreme precision and prudence, in one direction and towards a single goal. Besides, they must avoid all that may lead to their dispersion, disorder, and the loss of their strength.
As for foreign affairs, this front should avoid all kinds of ties and relations that might cause the world of Islam to fall in the danger of decline and heteronomy.
It is quite obvious that watching and maintaining these two principles of "Al-Wilaya" (internal harmony and solidarity, and non-subordination to the Outside) requires a central authority that would practically embody all of the strength and constructive elements of Islam (that is the Imam - the Islamic Ruler). It further requires a deep commitment of all members of the Islamic nation to the Islamic Ruler (the Imam) in such a way that the pivot of all public activities of the society would be related to him. Thus, here is another aspect of "AL-Wilaya" that of "the Imam and the leading of the Islamic World."
In the following verses, the Quran's reference to such succinct and deep facts can be noticed.

*"O you who Believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as awliya (friends, protectors, helpers etc) they are friends (or protectors etc) of each other. And if any amongst you takes them (as so) then surely he's one of them. Verily, Allah guides not the wrongdoers (also unjust, polytheists...). RAnd you see those in whose hearts there is sickness (of hypocrisy) hurry to their friendship, saying, "We fear lest some misfortune of a disaster may befall us." Perhaps, Allah may bring a victory or a decision according to His will. Then they will become regretful for what they have been keeping as a secret within themselves. *And those who believe will say, "Are these the men (hypocrites) who*

*swore their earnest oaths by Allah that they were with you (Muslims)?" All that they did has been in vain (because of their hypocrisy), and they have become the losers. **
O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion (Islam). Allah will bring a people whom He loves and they love Him. (They are) humble towards the believers, stern towards the unbelievers. (They) fight in the cause of Allah and never fear the blames of blamers. That is the grace of Allah, which he bestows on whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient (for His creatures needs), All-Knower.
** Verily, your Wali (Imam) is no one other than Allah, His Messenger, and the believers- They who perform the prayer, and give the alms-tax while they are in inclination (those who bow down or submit themselves with obedience to Allah in prayer). * And whosoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and those who believed as Imams, (must know) the party of Allah will be the victorious.}* (5:51-55).

{O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and abstaining from He has forbidden) as He should be feared. And die not except in the state of Islam (As Muslims in complete submission to Allah). And hold fast to Allah's Rope, all of you together, and be not divided among yourselves... } (3:102-103).

22- The Paradise of Al-Wilaya

The society is considered to be in the line of Al-Wilaya, when the Wali (Imam) is nominated and he is practically the source for all human activities.
As for the individual, he would be a true follower of "Al-Wilaya" when he knows the "Wali" (Imam) well and works to strengthen his relationship with him- as he represents the divine authority. Since the "Wali" is the representative

of God and the manifestation of His just might on earth, he employs all of the abilities and aptitudes that lie in the existence of human beings to make them reach perfection and sublimity. Furthermore, he acts as a tough shield in the face of all that can lead to their harm.
In addition, he works to establish justice and security in order to trigger human capabilities as well as to provide the fertile land, fresh water, and the suitable environment for living. Moreover, he prevents all forms of injustice to take place (such as polytheism, aggression, and self-injustice) and guides everybody to the servitude of God. He also works on raising the level of human reasoning and urges people to work and be creative. Besides, the remembrance of God (that is the prayer) and putting an end to all abominable acts (that is forbidding the bad) constitute primary points of his agenda.
In brief, Al-Wali (the Imam) is the one who brings humanity close to the goal that it was created to fulfill.
Pondering on the following verses, opens for us a wide perspective of the paradise of "Al-Wilaya" and clarifies the secret behind the following saying: "..and nothing (more important) was advocated for as it was advocated for "Al-Wilaya"."

*{Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus- Mary's son. That was because they disobeyed (Allah and the Messenger) and were ever transgressing beyond bound. * They used not to forbid one another from wrongdoing (evil-doing-sins, polytheism, disbelief), which they committed. Vile, indeed, what they used to do. * You see many of them taking the disbelievers as Awliya (protectors and helpers). Evil, indeed, is that to which their selves prompt them. For that (reason) Allah's wrath fell upon them, and in torment they*

*will abide. * And had they believed in Allah and the Prophet and in what has been revealed to him, they would never have taken them (the disbelievers) as Awliya (protectors and helpers); but many of them are evil-doers (rebellious, disobedient, ...).}* (5:78-81).

*{O you who believe! Take not as Awliya (protectors and helpers) those who take your religion as mockery and fun from among those who received the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before you, and nor from the disbelievers; and fear Allah if you indeed are true believers. And when you proclaim the call to prayer, they take it but as mockery and a fun; that is because they are a people who understand not. * Say, "O People of the Scripture, do you criticize us for other than that we believe in Allah, and in that which has been sent down to us, and in that which was sent down before (us), and that most of you are evil-doers (rebellious and disobedient to Allah)? * Say (O Mohammed to the people of the Scripture), "Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allah, those (Jews) who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath, and (some) of whom He transformed into monkeys and swine, and those who worshipped false deities; such are worse in rank (on the Day of Resurrection in the Hell-fire), and farther more astray from the right path (in this world). "}* (5:57-60).

23- Regarding Al-Wilaya

In addition to the elaboration and comprehensiveness given to the principle of "Al-Wilaya in the Quran, many issues are addressed around it where each of which could constitute a principle in itself to know the Islamic trends.
Through careful consideration of the following verses, we

can come to grasp some of those issues:
1. The Wali (Imam) of the Islamic society, in other words, the authority that guides and manages all of the intellectual and practical activities of society is Almighty Allah and he who is appointed by Him – either by name or trait – to fulfill this office.

{Verily, your Wali (Imam) is none other than Allah, His Messenger, and the believers- those who perform the prayers, and pay the alms-tax while they are in inclination (those who bow down or submit themselves with obedience to Allah in prayer).} (5:55).

{Verily, Allah commands that you hand back the trusts to their owners; and that when you judge between people, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching Allah gives you! Truly, Allah is ever All-hearing, All-seeing. O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those of you who in authority. Should you disagree about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day; that is better, and more suitable in the end. Have you seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down before you, and they wish to go for judgment to the Taghut (false deities, rulers, judges) while they have been ordered to reject them. But Satan wishes to lead them far astray.}* (4:58-60).

{He who obeys the Messenger, has indeed obeyed Allah, but he who turns away, then we haven't sent you (O Mohammed) as a watcher over them.} (4:80).

2. The authority of God and its acceptance by the believers are rooted in the philosophy, doctrine, and the Islamic cosmic notion, therefore they are two natural matters:

*{And to Him belongs whatever exists in the night and the day; and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. * Say (O Mohammed), "Shall I take as a Wali(helper, protector, lord or god)) other than Allah, the Creator of the heavens and of the earth? And it is He Who feeds and is not fed?" Say: "Verily, I am commanded to be the first of those who submit themselves to Allah (as Muslims)." And be not you (O Mohammed) of the Mushrikeen (polytheists, disbelievers in the oneness of God).}* (6:13-14).

3. Every allegiance to other than God and His representatives is an allegiance to Satan and the Taghut[15]. Further, the acceptance of Satan's allegiance leads to his domination over all effective and creative capabilities that lie deep inside human beings and putting them in the service of rebellion and lusts. For, the Taghut are self-absorbent, believing in nothing but their own interests, and look at the interests of society as being merely a tool to fulfill their own. In fact, they disregard people's needs and their natural capabilities. Therefore, their leading of the society becomes the cause of all kinds of delusion, loss, and forfeiture of many great faculties. Due to this ignorance and negligence that take place in society and the world under the reign of the Taghut, humanity is deprived of the light of knowledge and the blessings of God's religion and hence remains imprisoned in the darkness of ignorance, self-conceit, self-indulgence, and rebellion.

{When you recite the Quran, seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan. Verily, he has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord.* His power is only over those who obey and follow him, and those who set up partners with Him (that is those who are polytheists).}*(16:98-100).

*{And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the right path has been shown clearly to him and follows other than the believers' way; We shall keep him on the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell- what an evil destination! * Verily, Allah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners with Him, but He forgives whom He wills all other sins. And whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed far away. * They (all those who worship other than Allah) invoke nothing but female deities besides Him, and they invoke nothing but Satan, a persistent rebel! * Allah cursed him. And he (the Satan) said, "I will take an appointed number of your slaves. * Verily, I will mislead them and surely, I will arouse in them false desires; and certainly, I will order them to slit the ears of cattle, and indeed I will order them to change the nature created by Allah." And whoever take the Satan as a Wali (protector, helper) instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss. * He (the Satan) makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires; and the Satan's promises are nothing but deceptions.}* (4:115-120).

{Allah is the Wali (Protector, Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light. But, as for those who disbelieve, their Awliya (supporters and helpers) are Taghut (false deities and false leaders) they bring them out from light into darkness. Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever.} (2:257).

24. Emigration

Allegiance to the Taghut and Satan under the ignorant and despotic regime makes the believer tied down by thousands of ties to the despotic power. Moreover, it besieges him in a hidden manner within the walls of the ignorant regime,

deprives him his freedom, and drags him involuntarily to the same destiny that awaits that regime. In addition, it prevents him to employ his abilities in the cause of Allah and in the path that the religion and Islamic approach has laid out.
This truth, that is irrefutable and which has no exception, proposes the issue of emigration (Al-hijrah).
Emigration means to be freed from the bondage of the ignorant regime and reaching the free Islamic environment where all factors and human motives approach one from the goal God wants. It is where the natural social course towards the intellectual, spiritual, and materialistic sublimity and perfection is founded. It is where the ways of good and righteousness are opened, and that of evil are closed....It is where the Islamic society is established.
Accordingly, based on the principle of "Al-Wilaya", emigration, for the believer, means necessary and direct commitment to move from the ignorant environment to the Islamic society and entering the realm of God's authority.
Pondering on the Quranic verses pertaining to "Al-Wilaya", clarifies many issues in this regard, let us listen to those inspiring verses:

{ They wished that you would reject Faith, as they have rejected (faith), and thus that you all become equal (like one another). So take not Awliya (protectors and friends) from them, till they emigrate in the way of Allah (to Mohammed). But if they turn back (from Islam), take (hold of) them and kill them wherever you find them, and take neither "Awliya" (protectors or friends) nor helpers from them.} (4:89).

{Surely, those who believed, and migrated and strove hard and fought with their property and their lives in the cause of Allah, and those who gave (them) asylum and help-those are allies to one another. And as to those who believed but

did not emigrate, you owe no protection to them until they migrate; but if they seek your help in the cause of religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people you have a treaty with, of mutual alliance; and Allah is the All-seer of what you do. * And those who disbelieve are allies of one another (and) if you (Muslims of the whole world collectively) do not do so (become allies to make victorious Allah's religion) there will be persecution in the Land and great mischief and corruption (appearance of polytheism).* * And those who believe, and migrated and strove hard in the cause of Allah and those who gave them asylum and aid -those are the believers in truth, for them is forgiveness and generous provision (that is paradise).}* (8:72-74).

"Verily! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves (as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them), they (angels) say (to them), "In what (condition) were you?" They reply, "We were weak and oppressed on the earth." They (angels) say, "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?" such men will find their abode in Hell- what an evil destination! * *Except the weak ones among them, women and children who cannot devise a plan, nor are they able to direct their way.* * *These are they whom Allah is likely to forgive, and Allah is ever All- pardoning, All-forgiving.* **He who emigrates (from his home) in the cause of Allah, will find on earth many dwelling places and plenty to live by. And whosoever leaves his home as an emigrant unto Allah and His Messenger, and death overtakes him, his reward is then surely incumbent upon Allah. And Allah is ever All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.}* (4.97-100).

1. *Ulamā: Plural of Alem, the persons learned in the religion*

2. *the uprising of 15th Khurdad(calendar month) took place on 5/6/1963. Following Imam Khomeini's historical sermon at Al-Faydiya School, he was arrested by the regime. This event moved the people and ignited their anger in the various towns and cities. As an act of objection, people headed to the capital city of Iran (Tehran). There the regime's armed forces and their tanks were surrounding the city to prevent the protesters from moving into the city. Clashes took place between the armed forces and the people, which led to the death and the injury of a large number of people.*

3. *the National Security Intelligence Agency was officially established in the year 1957. Its role was to restrain and confront the opposition to the regime and to attack the Islamic movement in Iran. It had relations with the C.I.A. and the Israeli M.O.S.A.D. to the extent that it became a center for the American Intelligence Agency in the Middle East. This organization was one of terror, using all sorts of torture tactics*

(electricity, entering pieces of broken glass into the anus of the captives, sexual abuse of the prisoners and their wives and children in the presence of the prisoners etc..) on their captives. These criminal acts reached the stage that made the general secretary of the International Condonation Organization issue in the year 1975 an announcement saying that there is no country in the world worse than Iran concerning human rights (referring to the SAVAK's acts). The SAVAK was broke up in the year 1979 By the Muslim Iranian people.

4. *is a book containing a number of Imam Ali's sermons tackling various topics: God and his attributes, morals, Islamic doctrine etc....*

5. *Martyr Mortada Mutahhari was one of the very religious and active ulamā. He played an important role in showing the true face of Islam through his numerous lectures, which used to tackle various religious and social issues. He wrote a number of articles and books that had great impact inside the Hawzas and universities.*

   After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran Imam Khomeini appointed him the chief of The Revolutionary Command Council on 1/5/1979. He was martyred by the Furkan Organization which was a subordinate of the C.I.A.. His legacy includes around 50 books and numerous articles and lectures. Concerning his writings, Imam Khomeini says, "his writings were very beneficial.... I advise university students and the religious intellectuals not to let the anti-Islamic conspiracies make you forget the books of this dear teacher". Martyr Motahari was one of the outstanding students of Imam Khomeini who benefited and for years of the Imam's lessons in fiqh, Usul, philosophy, morals, and irfan.

6. *Mohammed Jawad Bahonar Born in the year 1933 in a very poor family in the city of kurman. He finished his primary education in Kurman then moved to the city of Qum to do religious studies*

besides the academic one. He got a masters degree in literature and education, as well as a P.H.D. in theology studies. He started his political activities in the year 1951 besides educational and media ones. He was arrested and imprisoned many times and prevented from ascending a pulpit before the Islamic Revolution victory. The posts he held following the Islamic Revolution are as follows: A member of the Revolutionary Command council, a member of the Islamic state council, the representative of the city of Kurman in the Constitution Council, minister of education, a member of the foundation of the Republic Party, secretary general of the party, and prime minister. He was martyred on 30/8/1981 in the explosion that was implanted in the prime ministry building.

7. *edicts, or the jurisdictions issued by the faqih*

8. *Imam Ali was the first Imam in the line of the infallibles. He's the cousin of the Prophet Mohammed and the husband of his daughter Sayyeda Fatima Azzahrā. His father is Abu Talib the prophet's uncle. Imam Ali lived in the house of the prophet from the age of six onwards. He was the first to believe in and support the prophet. When God ordered the prophet to inform his family about his prophethood, he gathered them and asked them to help him convey the message of God to the people and informed them that whoever would do so would be his brother and the guardian after him. He repeated this three times and no one responded but Imam Ali who was still very young at the time.*

   He was always by the prophet's side, helping him, fighting beside him, and shouldering difficulties with him throughout the period of proclaiming God's message to the people. Following the farewell pilgrimage (the pilgrimage after which the prophet died) God revealed to the prophet "declare what has been revealed to you and if u don't this means that you haven't declared god's message". This revelation made the prophet call all Muslims to gather in a town called "Ghadir Khum" where he announced Imam Ali to be his successor and asked people to plead allegiance

to him. However, following the prophet's death, Imam Ali was denied from his right to lead the Islamic government for 25 years. After the death of the third caliph, people pleadallegiance to him. His rule lasted for 4 years and 9 months. During this period, he put things back in order after the corruptions that took place while he was kept away from power. However, the enemies of Islam who saw in his rule a threat to their personal interests declared war against him under the slogan of "avenging the third caliph". Bloody fights took place throughout the period of his rule, until he was killed while prostrating in prayer at the mosque of Kufa in Iraq.

9. *Imam Assadiq was the 6th Imam in the line of infallibles. He was born in Al-Madina on the 17th of Rabi' AlAwal, in the year 80 A.H.. One of his greatest achievements was to document the principals for Islamic writings, which was previously uncommon. It is recorded that he had around 4000 students who compiled approximatly 400 books and in turn conveyed the knowledge they acquired from him to others. In this way, Imam Assadek was able to establish a firm base for Islam to confront the various political movements and schools of thoughts that appeared at his time and whose aim was to pull down the religion of Islam. He died in the year 148 A.H. at the age of 65 or 68 and was buried in Baki' in Al-Madina near his father Imam Mohammed Al-Bakir and His grandfather Imam Assajjad (Ali the son of Imam Hussein).*

10. *Imam Al-Rida was the 8th Imam in the line of infallibles. He was born in the year 148 A.H. He lived with his father Imam Moussa Al-Kazem for 35 years, predominantly under the rule of Haroon Al-Rasheed. When Al-Ma'moon came to power, he obliged Imam Al-Rida to accept to be his successor, in an attempt to diminish the status of the Imam in the eyes of the people and to attract their attention to himself. When the Imam refused, Al-Ma'moon threatened to kill him, thus forcing the Imam to accept his offer. Al-Ma'moon loved scientific debates and he used to*

hold such sessions frequently in his palace in the presence of the Imam. This gave Imam Al-Rida the chance to spread Islamic knowledge and plead the case of the other religious schools of thoughts. The Imam's status, rather then diminish actually grew, and Al-Ma'moon came to regard Imam Al-Rida as a threat to his throne because of the large number of people who loved and followed him. Imam Al-Rida was eventually poisoned by Al-Ma'moon and died in the year 203 A.H. and was buried in the city of Mashhad in Iran.

11. *Imam Ali Assajjad is the son of Imam Al-Hussein and the 4th Imam in the line of infallibles. He was Born in the year 38 A.H. and Imprisoned in Damascus by the Ummayad ruler Yazid and later put under heavy supervision in Al-Medina from the regime. He used his supplications (Assahifa Assajadiya) as his means to compile the principles of Islamic thought and to revive these thoughts in the hearts and minds of people who were leading a totally materialistic life at that time. This was one of the most important works of Imam Assajad that helped preserve the pure Islamic thought and turned people's attention to the true goals and values of Islam. Imam Assajjad was poisoned by the king Hisham the son of Abd Al-Malik and died in the year 95 A.H. He was buried near his uncle Imam Al-Hassan.*

12. *Imam Al-Hassan was the second Imam in the line of the infallibles. He was born in Al-Medina (Saudi Arabia) in the 2nd year A.H. He came to power after his father Imam Ali and people plead allegiance to him. During that time, Mo'awiya was ruling Al-Sham. So Imam AL_Hassan prepared an army to force him out of power. However, Mo'awiya was able to bribe many of the Imam's followers with money, which lead many of them to betraying Imam Al-Hassan. This left Imam Al-Hassan with no other choice but to sign a peace treaty with Mo'awiya, because he was able to realize that war with Mo'awiya was going to lead to his death which meant at that time the vanishing or loss of imamet. However, Imam Al-Hassan included a number of*

conditions in the peace treaty to preserve Islam. Nevertheless, it didn't take Mo'awiya long before he broke these conditions and commitments, forcing Imam Al-Hassan to retreat to Al-Medina and live there for 10 years under oppression. Even here the treachery did not stop. Mo'awiya recruited Imam Al-'Hassan's wife to poison him, bribing her with money and with promises to marry her to his son Yazid, which he later broke. Imam Al-Hassan died in the year 50 A.H. and was buried in Baki' in Al-Medina.

13. *When we talk about God's dominance over His creatures it is meant that dominance that is mixed with compassion and wisdom without depriving them their choice.*

14. *Al-Wilaya: is a word that has various meanings of different orders, the highest of which is "intimate relation" and one of its meanings is "the divine authority -which encompasses guardianship and care- given to the prophet or the Imam or to those who represent them over society,." Another meaning is to adhere and pay allegiance to such authority.*
    Al-Wali is he who has intimate relation with God and with His representatives on earth the prophet, Imam, and he who represent them, it is also he who assumes such responsibility that is he who is given the divine authority like the prophet and Imam and he who represent them.

15. *Taghut: false deities, despots, tyrants or any authority that reigns over people other than the divine one.*